

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-51. (canceled)

52. (new) A fiber bale, made by a process comprising:

compressing fibers;

forming a substantially cuboidal package around the fibers, the package comprising a top wall, a bottom wall, and a plurality of side walls, wherein at least one wall of the package comprises an evacuator;

sealing the package;

evacuating the package through the evacuator to achieve an internal pressure less than ambient atmospheric pressure; and

thereafter releasing compression.

53. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the fibers comprise cellulose acetate fibers.

54. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls are comprised of a polymeric film.

55. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls are comprised of one or more of: polyethylene, polypropylene, ethylene vinyl alcohol polymer, nylon, mylar, polyethylene terephthalate, polyethylene terephthalate glycol, polyimides, or polyamides, biaxially oriented nylon, linear low density polyethylene, or ultra linear low density polyethylene.

56. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls are comprised of a plurality of layers.

57. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls are in the form of a laminate construction.

58. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls are comprised of a polymeric film coated with silicon dioxide.

59. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls comprise a metal foil.

60. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls provide one or more of a gaseous barrier, a moisture barrier, or an odor barrier.

61. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the evacuator is selected from a valve, a port, a tube, or a hose.

62. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the evacuator comprises a vacuum check valve.

63. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the evacuator comprises a plurality of evacuators.

64. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the internal pressure is from 16,000 Pa to below 101,325 Pa.

65. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the internal pressure is from 40,000 Pa to 92,000 Pa.

66. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the internal pressure is from 50,000 Pa to 70,000 Pa.

67. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale is from 80 cm to 120 cm in width, from 100 cm to 150 cm in length, and from 105 cm to 155 cm in height.

68. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale is from 95 cm to 105 cm in width, from 115 cm to 125 cm in length, and from 120 cm to 135 cm in height.

69. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale has an internal volume from 0.9 cubic meters to 2.3 cubic meters.

70. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale has an internal volume from 0.9 cubic meters to 2.3 cubic meters.

71. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale has an internal volume from 1.2 cubic meters to 1.8 cubic meters.

72. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale has an internal volume from 1.4 cubic meters to 1.6 cubic meters.

73. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale has an internal volume from 1.7 cubic meters to 2 cubic meters.

74. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein a difference in height between an edge of the top wall and a center point of the top wall is less than 5 cm.

75. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein a difference in height between an edge of the top wall and a center point of the top wall is less than 3 cm.

76. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein a difference in height between an edge of the top wall and a center point of the top wall is less than 1 cm.

77. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale has a density from 0.2 to 0.9 grams per cubic centimeter.

78. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale has a density from 0.48 to 0.82 grams per cubic centimeter.

79. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the resulting bale has a density from 0.50 to 0.78 grams per cubic centimeter.

80. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the process further comprises surrounding the sealed package with additional packaging material.

81. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls comprise a laminate construction wherein each wall comprises a polymeric film and a barrier element.

82. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls comprise a polymeric film wall element having a water vapor permeability from 0.001 to 4.3 grams/milliliter ("g/ml") per 100 square inches per 24 hours at 38°C.

83. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls comprise a polymeric film wall element having a water vapor permeability from 0.003 to 0.3 grams/milliliter ("g/ml") per 100 square inches per 24 hours at 38°C.

84. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls comprise a wall element having an oxygen permeability from 0.001 to 185 cubic centimeters per 100 square inches per 24 hours at 25° C.

85. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls comprise a wall element having an oxygen permeability from 0.01 to 0.06 cubic centimeters per 100 square inches per 24 hours at 25° C.

86. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the walls comprise a laminate packaging material comprising a sealing layer.

87. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 86, wherein the sealing layer comprises a heat sealable polymer.

88. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the substantially cuboidal package is formed from a bottom piece and a top piece that are joined at their edges to form the top wall, the bottom wall, and the plurality of side walls.

89. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 52, wherein the evacuator comprises a check valve that allows one way flow from the interior to the exterior of the package.

90. (new) A fiber bale comprising,
a sealed chamber comprising a bulk material,
wherein the bulk material comprises fibers,
wherein the density of the bulk material in the sealed chamber is from 0.2 to 0.9 g/cm³;

wherein the sealed chamber comprises a top wall, a bottom wall and a plurality of side walls;

wherein the package has a substantially cuboidal shape;

wherein the top and bottom walls of the sealed chamber are substantially flat;
wherein at least one wall comprises an evacuator; and
wherein the initial pressure in the sealed chamber is less than ambient atmospheric pressure.

91. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 90, wherein the fibers comprise cellulose acetate fibers.

92. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 90, wherein the walls are comprised of a polymeric film.

93. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 90, wherein the walls are comprised of one or more of: polyethylene, polypropylene, ethylene vinyl alcohol polymer, nylon, mylar, polyethylene terephthalate, polyethylene terephthalate glycol, polyimides, polyamides, biaxially oriented nylon, linear low density polyethylene, or ultra linear low density polyethylene.

94. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 90, wherein the walls provide one or more of a gaseous barrier, a moisture barrier, or an odor barrier.

95. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 90, wherein the dimensions of the bale are from 80 cm to 120 cm in width, from 100 cm to 150 cm in length, and from 105 cm to 155 cm in height.

96. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 90, wherein the sealed chamber has an internal volume from 0.9 to 2.3 m³.

97. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 90, wherein the height of the center of the top wall is less than 6.3% greater than the height of an edge of the top wall.

Application No. 10/672,825
Amendment dated August 31, 2006
Reply to Office action dated April 4, 2006

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98. (new) The fiber bale according to claim 90, wherein the height of the center of the top wall is less than 2.4% greater than the height of an edge of the top wall.